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ABSTRACT

These guidelines offer recommended topic areas and content for training local-level food service personnel. The recommended topic areas for training school food service directors/supervisors and food service managers are nutrition requirements, menu planning for school meals, procurement, financial management, marketing, food production, program management, and equipment. Basic skills that are considered a prerequisite to the training topic areas and content for food service managers include food safety, computer skills, life skills, and dealing with children with special needs. The recommended topic areas for training school food service production staff are nutrition requirements, food production, and food service systems. Basic skills that are considered a prerequisite to the training topic area and content for food service production staff include computer and math skills and sanitation and safety. Resources for training include the Nutrition Education and Training Program and Cooperative Extension and the Healthy School Meals Resource System. The guidelines list materials and training developed to address some of the content of each of the topic areas for the three levels of personnel. The listing includes materials developed by the Department of Agriculture, the American School Food Service Association, the School Food Service Foundation, and the National Food Service Management Institute. (SM)

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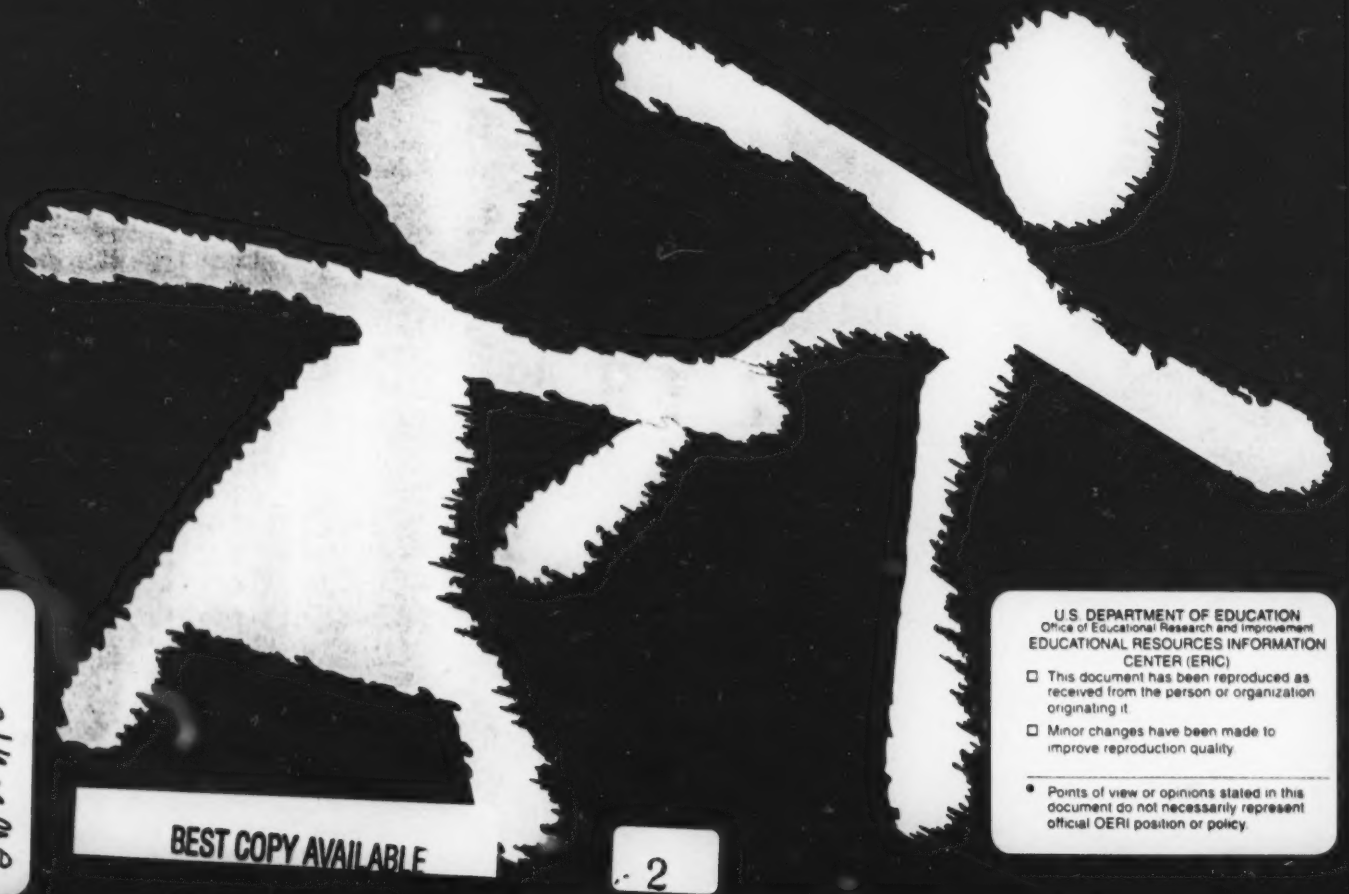
Training Guidelines *for* Healthy School Meals



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Guidelines for Training Food Service Professionals to Achieve Healthy School Meals

As part of the School Meals Initiative for Healthy Children, USDA has made a commitment to help state and local school food service programs meet the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. A key component of this assistance is the "Training Plan for Healthy School Meals." The mission of the plan is:

To ensure that school nutrition and food service personnel have the education, motivation, training, and skills necessary to provide healthy meals that appeal to the children served and meet the USDA nutrition requirements. These personnel will also have a clear vision of their role in the school community and as an integral team member of comprehensive school health programs.

The USDA Food and Consumer Service, in consultation with key food service professionals and national organizations, has developed guidelines for training food service professionals to achieve healthy school meals. These guidelines offer recommended topic areas and content for training local level food service personnel.

The recommended topic areas for training **School Food Service Directors/Supervisors, and Managers** are:

- Nutrition Requirements
- Menu Planning for School Meals
- Procurement
- Financial Management
- Marketing
- Food Production
- Program Management
- Equipment

The recommended topic areas for training **School Food Service Production Staff** (including general and technical assistants) are:

- Nutrition Requirements
- Food Production
- Food Service Systems

Training or educational programs should also consider the employee's career goals and professional development plans. Educational credits or other documentation of the training received will assist the employee who is interested in a career development program.

Food Service Directors/Supervisors

Recommended Topic Areas and Content

Nutrition Requirements
Dietary Guidelines for Americans; RDA's; USDA Nutrition Requirements; Energy allowances for children; Holistic approach to nutritional requirements; Use of the Food Guide Pyramid; Current issues in nutritional needs of children; Obtaining nutrient information for food products; Nutrition management for children with special needs.

Menu Planning for School Meals
Factors to consider when selecting NuMenus, Assisted NuMenus, the Food Based System, or alternative approaches for planning reimbursable meals; Menu planning principles; Description of requirements for NuMenus, the Food Based System, or alternative approaches for planning reimbursable meals; Involving customers in menu planning; Incorporating cultural, ethnic, and regional preferences; Importance of taste and appeal to students; Effective use of commodities; Procedures for obtaining nutrient analysis of menus, including managing a nutrient database; Selecting nutrient analysis software; and Evaluating results of a nutrient analysis.

Procurement
Developing bid procedures; Product specifications; How to ask for, interpret, and evaluate nutrient information; Receiving and storage procedures; Purchasing new products; Methods to control costs; Evaluating products, including taste-testing procedures and student involvement; Alternative methods of purchasing.

Financial Management
Budget considerations when implementing change; Using computers as a management tool; Key financial controls used in menu planning, food procurement, production, service, delivery, and inventory management; Budgeting; Use of spreadsheets and other software programs for financial management.

Marketing

Marketing child nutrition programs as an integral part of education and comprehensive school health programs; Marketing healthy food choices to students, parents and the school community; Promotional events such as celebrating ethnic cuisine; Menu variety; Importance of adapting menus to regional, cultural, and ethnic preferences; Involving students in the marketing process; Evaluation of marketing strategies.

Food Production

Importance of standardized recipes and adjusting recipes; Use of production records; Production techniques to produce nutritious meals that appeal/taste good to students; Food delivery systems; On-site vs. centralized food production.

Program Management

Selection and training of personnel; Team building; Skills for implementing and evaluating change; Coaching and training techniques; Time management; Communication; Teaching and evaluating employees; Customer service skills; Creativity in managing programs; Assessing program quality/effectiveness; Continuous improvement principles; Measuring customer satisfaction; Improving customer service; Self-assessment techniques and resources; Using and assessing program quality standards; Managing sale of a la carte foods on school campus.

Equipment

Selection and use of equipment for flexibility, long-term use, and production of healthy school meals; Factors to consider in facility design.

Food Service Managers (Single-Site)

Recommended Topic Areas and Content

Nutrition Requirements

Overview of Dietary Guidelines for Americans; RDA's; Energy allowances for children; USDA nutrition requirements; Nutrition management for children with special needs.

(The single-site manager is a key, front-line implementation agent. The following topics and content will vary based on the food service operation. For example, when developing training programs for this group consider: size of district, methods used to transport foods, type of procurement and service, type of menu planning, technology available, age and special needs of children, and centralized vs on-site preparation.)

Menu Planning for School Meals

Explanation of requirements for the menu planning systems selected: NuMenus, Assisted NuMenus, Food Based Systems, or alternative approaches for planning reimbursable meals; Importance of taste and appeal to students; Standardized recipes; Recognition of reimbursable meals.

Procurement

Procurement procedures; Importance of receiving procedures; Food storage techniques; Alternative purchasing procedures.

Financial Management

Use of financial controls in the planning, procurement, production, storage, service, and delivery of foods.

Marketing

Marketing healthy food choices to students, parents, and the school community; Food presentation techniques; Using menus as a merchandising tool; Integration of the food service program with the education and comprehensive school health programs; Student and community involvement.

Food Production

Effective use of food production records; Adjusting recipes; Food preparation and service techniques to produce healthy meals that appeal/taste good to students; Increased use of fruits, vegetable, legumes, and grains; Recipe standardization.

Program Management

Organizing work schedules; Personnel management when implementing change; Team building and networking; Time management; Communication; Implementing a program focused on customer service; Training/coaching skills; Skills for implementing change; Evaluating and improving customer satisfaction; Assessing program quality and using results to implement program changes.

Equipment

Equipment use and maintenance.

Basic skills that are considered a prerequisite to the Training Topic Areas and Content for Food Service Managers include the following:

Food Safety

Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP); Proper handling of food; Temperature controls; Personal hygiene; Proper cleaning and maintenance of equipment; Recognition of symptoms of food-borne illness.

Computer Skills

Training should be targeted to the individual needs of the student and based on the food service operation.

Life Skills

Interpersonal skills; Basic reading, communications, writing, math; Problem-solving skills; Team building.

Children with Special Needs

Importance of providing children with meals that meet their individual needs; Awareness of laws and regulations when providing meals for children with special needs.

Food Service Production Staff General/Technical Assistants

Recommended Topic Areas and Content

Nutrition Requirements

Nutritional needs of children; Understanding the USDA nutrition requirements; Relationship of food preparation to nutritional content; Relationship of nutrition to health and learning; Relationship of food quality to nutrition; Food labeling; Understanding product fact sheets.

Food Production

Basic food preparation/food techniques for a variety of food products with emphasis on taste and health; Food quality/standards; Increased use of fruits, vegetables, legumes, and grains; Equipment use and maintenance; Knife skills; Ingredient functions; Recipe standardization/importance of using and following recipes; Food presentation and enhancement; Portion control; Scheduling/timing; Flavor development/use of ingredients; Ethnic and cultural foods; Convenience food/value-added products; Food storage and handling procedures for optimal quality.

Food Service Systems

Portioning/serving utensils; Temperature control/time handling of foods; Presentation and line set-up; Marketing; Customer service; Personal appearance; Recognizing reimbursable meals; Procedures needed to handle financial reporting requirements.

Basic skills that are considered a prerequisite to the Training Topic Areas and Content for Food Service Production Staff include the following:

Computer and Math Skills

Training should be targeted to individual needs of the student and based on the food service operation.

Sanitation and Safety

Knowledge and skills in basic sanitation and safety techniques.

Resources for Training

Nutrition Education and Training (NET) Program and Cooperative Extension

In addition to Child Nutrition Program Directors, staff in USDA's Nutrition Education and Training (NET) Program and Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service are key partners in the implementation of Team Nutrition Training Programs. Regional, State, and local instructors should adapt training based on the needs of the food service personnel in that location, taking into consideration the particular needs of adult learners. It is expected that training needs will vary based on a variety of factors, including previous education and training, and school food service experience. To maximize resources, it is recommended that existing training programs and partnerships be utilized to the extent feasible and practicable.

Healthy School Meals Resource System

USDA's Food and Nutrition Information Center (FNIC) has developed a Healthy School Meals Resource System to assist trainers in locating appropriate and useful information. The system organizes available resources based on the identified topic areas. Effective materials are accessible in print, by fax, on computer disk, or via the Internet. Ordering information for the selected resources is included. Resources are organized by type of instructional material, such as: curriculum, software, posters, etc. To best meet the needs of school nutrition personnel and trainers, the resource system is available in a number of ways as described below:

Printed listing by mail
Provides a listing of materials, including ordering information, available on loan from FNIC.

Computer disk
Provides a listing of materials with the added benefit of a search program that allows a search by keywords related to the topic of interest.

Internet services

FNIC maintains easy-to-use gopher and World Wide Web sites where users may read or download files. Because it is linked to other gophers and World Wide Web sites worldwide, the Internet route used to reach FNIC will vary. Below are several examples:

System Requirements: Internet access with gopher, telnet, or World Wide Web capability.

Access Methods:

You can participate in an electronic discussion group called MEALTALK. MEALTALK provides a forum for people interested in healthy school meals to discuss ideas that work and to provide feedback on the resource system. To subscribe (no cost) to MEALTALK, send an e-mail message to majordomo@nalusda.gov and include only the following words in the body of the message:

subscribe mealtalk Your Name <your e-mail address>

For example, if your name is Jane Smith and your e-mail address is jsmsith@anywhere.edu, you would type:

subscribe mealtalk Jane Smith <anywhere.edu>

Use the World Wide Web address

http://schoolmeals.nal.usda.gov:8001

For information and assistance, please contact

Food and Nutrition Information Center
National Agricultural Library
Room 304, 10301 Baltimore Blvd.
Beltsville, MD 20705-2351
Phone: (301) 504-5719
FAX: (301) 504-6409
TTY: (301) 504-6856
Internet: fnic@nalusda.gov

Training and Technical Assistance Component

In July 1995, USDA's Food and Consumer Service, in consultation with key food service professionals and national organizations, developed guidelines for training food service professionals to achieve healthy school meals. The guidelines offer recommended topic areas and content for training local level food service personnel. Materials and training developed to address some of the content of each of the topic areas for the three levels of personnel are listed on the following pages. The listing includes materials developed by USDA, the American School Food Service Association (ASFSA), the School Food Service Foundation (SFSF) and the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI).

Food Service Directors/Supervisors

Topic Area	Training and Materials
Nutrition Requirements	**USDA** Healthy School Meals Training (workshop and manual) Assisted NuMenus (manual) USDA Approved Software (list) **ASFSA** ASFSA/SFSF Trimming the Fat (manual and companion disk) **NFSMI** Managing Child Nutrition (CN) Programs to Teach Healthy Food Practices (video series and handouts)
Menu Planning for School Meals	**USDA** Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals (manual) Assisted NuMenus (manual) **ASFSA** ASFSA/SFSF Trimming the Fat (manual and companion disk) **NFSMI** Creating Healthy Meals for the Mainline—part I and II (videos and handouts)
Procurement	**USDA** Food Buying Guide *(revision due 1997)* Choice Plus (handbook) **NFSMI** First Choice (handbook) Purchasing and the Dietary Guidelines (video and handouts) INSIGHT—Purchasing Decisions (newsletter) Impact of Food Procurement on Dietary Guidelines for Americans (report)
Financial Management	**USDA** Healthy School Meals Training (workshop and manual) *(limited material for this topic area)* **ASFSA** ASFSA/SFSF Meeting the Challenge (available 1997)
Marketing	**USDA** Tool Kit for Healthy School Meals (recipes and promotion manual) Healthy School Meals Training (workshop and manual) Great Nutrition Adventure Action Packet (video and materials) **ASFSA** ASFSA/SFSF Target Your Market (manual and video) **NFSMI** Culinary Techniques for Healthy School Meals (13 videos and lessons) Hey, What's Cookin' (video) Go for the Gold with Customer Service (*BLT—video and handbook) Promoting Healthy Food Practices (video and handouts)

Food Service Directors/Supervisors continued

Topic Area	Training and Materials
Food Production	**USDA** Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals (manual) School Lunch Challenge Recipes Tool Kit for Healthy School Meals (recipes and training manual) **NFSMI** On the Road to Professional Food Preparation (*BLT—video and handbook) Culinary Techniques for Healthy School Meals (13 videos and lessons) Healthy Cuisine for Kids Workshop Get Ready, Get Set, Go for Quality Service (*BLT—video and handbook)
Program Management	**USDA** Healthy School Meals Training (workshop and manual) *(limited material for this topic area)* **ASFSA** ASFSA Keys to Excellence (manual) **NFSMI** INSIGHT—Job Functions and Tasks for School Nutrition Managers and District Directors (newsletter) Champions of Change: Child Nutrition Personnel (video) Enhancing Productivity in School Foodservice—Part I and II (videos and handouts)
Equipment	**NFSMI** Energy Conservation Manual for School Food Service Guidelines for Equipment to Prepare Healthy Meals (report)
All Topic Areas	**USDA** Healthy School Meals Resource System MEALTALK (discussion group) **NSFMI** Customer Service Help Desk *Your Healthy Food Line* (1-800-YHF-LINE) Research Related to Child Nutrition Programs (report) Healthy Cuisine for Kids Workshops ONE—Orientation for Nutrition Employees (videos and lessons) Keys to Excellence Support Materials (bibliography)

**BLT—Breakfast-Lunch-Training*

***Basic skills that are considered a prerequisite to the Training Topic Areas and Content for this level of food service professional.*

Food Service Managers (Single-Site)

Topic Area	Training and Materials
Nutrition Requirements	USDA Healthy School Meals Training (workshop and manual) Assisted NuMenus (manual) USDA Approved Software (list) ASFSA ASFSA/SFSF Trimming the Fat (manual and companion disk) NFSMI Managing Child Nutrition Programs to Teach Healthy Food Practices (video series and handouts)
Menu Planning for School Meals	USDA Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals (manual) Assisted NuMenus (manual) ASFSA ASFSA/SFSF Trimming the Fat (manual and companion disk) NFSMI Creating Healthy Menus for the Mainline—Part I and II (video and handouts) Participation: Key to Healthy Food Practices (video and handouts)
Procurement	USDA Food Buying Guide *(revision due 1997)* Choice Plus (handbook) NFSMI First Choice (handbook) Purchasing and the Dietary Guidelines (video and handouts)
Financial Management	USDA Healthy School Meals Training (workshop and manual) *(limited materials for this topic area)* ASFSA ASFSA/SFSF Meeting the Challenge (manual) *(available 1997)* NFSMI Purchasing and the Dietary Guidelines (video and handouts)
Marketing	USDA Tool Kit for Healthy School Meals (recipes and promotion manual) Healthy School Meals Training (workshop and manual) Great Nutrition Adventure Action Packet (video and materials) NFSMI Culinary Techniques for Healthy School Meals (13 videos and lessons) Hey, What's Cookin' (video) Go for the Gold with Customer Service (*BLT—video and handbook) Promoting Healthy Food Practices (video and handouts)
Food Production	USDA Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals (manual) Tool Kit for Healthy School Meals (recipes and training manual) School Lunch Challenge Recipes Culinary Training Institutes Culinary Training Videos

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Food Service Managers (Single-Site) continued

Topic Area	Training and Materials
	NFSMI Healthy Cuisine for Kids Workshop Healthy Cooking for Kids (*BLT video and handbook) Get Ready, Get Set, Go for Quality Service (*BLT video and handbook) Preparation and the Dietary Guidelines (video and handouts)
Program Management	**USDA** Healthy School Meals Training (workshop and manual) *(limited material for this topic area)* **ASFSA** ASFSA Keys to Excellence (manual) **NFSMI** Personnel That Make a Difference (video and handouts) ONE-Orientation for Nutrition Employees (videos and handouts)
Equipment	**NFSMI** ONE-Orientation for Nutrition Employees (videos and handouts)
**Food Safety	**USDA** Serving it Safe/A Manager's Tool Kit (CD-ROM and training manual) **NFSMI** ONE-Orientation for Nutrition Employees (videos and handouts)
**Computer Skills	**USDA** Healthy School Meals Training (workshop and manual) USDA Approved Software (list) **NFSMI** Customer Service Help Desk *Your Healthy Food Line* (1-800-YHF-LINE)
**Life Skills	**USDA** Healthy School Meals Training (workshop and manual) *(limited material for this topic area)* **NFSMI** ONE-Orientation for Nutrition Employees (videos and handouts)
**Children with Special Needs	**NFSMI** Nutrition Management for Children with Special Needs Workshops Costs Associated with Providing Meals for Children with Special Needs (report) CARE: Special Nutrition for Kids (video and manual) Special Foods for Special Kids (workbook)
All Topic Areas	**USDA** Healthy School Meals Resource System MEALTALK (discussion group) **NFSMI** Customer Service Help Desk *Your Healthy Food Line* (1-800-YHF-LINE) Keys to Excellence Support Materials (bibliography)

**BLT—Breakfast-Lunch-Training*

***Basic skills that are considered a prerequisite to the Training Topic Areas and Content for this level of food service professional.*

Food Service Production Staff
General/Technical Assistants

Topic Area	Training and Materials
Nutrition Requirements	USDA Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals (manual) Assisted NuMenus (manual) NFSMI Healthy Cooking for Kids (*BLT video and handbook) Managing Child Nutrition Programs to Teach Healthy Food Practices (video series)
Food Production	USDA Took Kit for Healthy School Meals (recipes and manual) Menu Planner for Healthy School Meals (manual) Culinary Training Institutes Culinary Training Videos NFSMI Healthy Cooking for Kids (*BLT video and handbook) Get Ready, Get Set, Go for Quality Service (*BLT video and handbook) Culinary Techniques for Healthy School Meals (13 videos and lessons) ONE-Orientation for Nutrition Employees (video and lessons)
Food Service Systems	USDA Tool Kit for Healthy School Meals (recipes and manual) NFSMI Personnel That Make a Difference (video and handouts) Get Ready, Get Set, Go for Quality Service (*BLT video and handbook) ONE-Orientation for Nutrition Employees (video and lessons) Culinary Techniques for Healthy Schooi Meals (13 videos and lessons) On the Road to Professional Food Preparation (*BLT—video and handbook) Enhancing Productivity in School Foodservice—Part I and II (videos and handouts)

Food Service Production Staff
General/Technical Assistants continued

Topic Area	Training and Materials
**Computer and Math Skills	USDA USDA Approved Software (list) NFSMI Customer Service Help Desk *Your Healthy Food Line* (1-800-YHF-LINE)
**Sanitation and Safety	USDA Serving it Safe (CD ROM self-instruction and training manual) NFSMI ONE-Orientation for Nutrition Employees (video and lessons)
All Topic Areas	USDA MEALTALK (discussion group) Healthy School Meals Resource System (electronic) NFSMI Customer Service Help Desk *Your Healthy Food Line* (1-800-YHF-LINE) ONE-Orientation for Nutrition Employees (video and lessons) Keys to Excellence Support Materials (bibliography)

**BLT—Breakfast-Lunch-Training*

***Basic skills that are considered a prerequisite to the Training Topic Areas and Content for this level of food service professional.*

Additionally, State Agency Grants have provided funding for State-level delivery of training aimed at enabling local school districts to provide healthy meals that appeal to children and meet the USDA nutrition standards by enhancing or developing a statewide training system for school food service personnel. Such training addresses many of the above topic areas for all three levels of personnel.

For more information about the materials listed above contact:

U.S. Department of Agriculture
Food and Consumer Service
Team Nutrition, Room 802
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FAX: (703) 739-3915
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